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New York

President:	Ms. Dlamini-Zuma/Mr. Kumalo	(South Africa)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Chevalier
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Bassole
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Costa Rica	Mr. Weisleder
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Indonesia	Mr. Wirajuda
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Ettalhi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

Letter dated 8 April 2008 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2008/229)

Report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security (S/2008/186)

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1625 (2005) on conflict prevention, particularly in Africa (S/2008/18)

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08-30700 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers, as indicated this morning, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes, in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Ouyahia, Former Prime Minister and Personal Representative of the President of Algeria, to take the floor.

Mr. Ouyahia (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, has asked me to convey to the Security Council his deep regret at not being able to be here in person to attend this important meeting due to an especially busy national agenda. He has also asked me to convey to the Council his best wishes for the success of this meeting between the African Union and the United Nations. He has also given me the honour of reading out to the Council the following message on this occasion.

> "I wish at the outset to thank the President of the Security Council for having taken the initiative to organize a high-level Security Council debate on strengthening partnership between the Security Council and regional organizations, particularly the African Union through its Peace and Security Council. It has indeed become urgent to improve the capacities and to strengthen the action of regional organizations, especially the African Union, in the critical area of maintaining peace and security.
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> "For the African continent, seeking and maintaining peace and security represents a major challenge as significant as the issue of development. In that respect, we note with pleasure the decrease in recent years of the number of conflicts and crisis situations on the continent, as well as the undeniable progress that has been made in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That trend should strengthen and grow thanks to Africa's collective commitment to peace, embodied in the actions of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. It should also be encouraged and robustly supported by the entire international community.
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> "At the tenth summit of the African Union that took place in Addis Ababa in January, the Secretary-General stressed the importance of tightening cooperation links between the African Union and the United Nations. He pointed out that it was vital to enhance that partnership in order to overcome the obstacles to peace and security on the continent. I welcome the high quality of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union and the progress that has been achieved in that area.
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> "In the framework of that cooperation, the transfer of authority took place late last year between the African Union Mission in Sudan and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. That major development was based on a dynamic balance between imperative political considerations and unavoidable operational and logistical requirements. Elsewhere, the United Nations has supported such African countries as Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau through the programme of work of the Peacebuilding Commission. In January 2007, two of those countries benefited from the Peacebuilding Fund. Unfortunately, the allocated budgetary envelope has not been fully disbursed.
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> "With respect to issues of peace and security, the situation in Africa has been characterized by emergences from crises and perpetuation of conflicts that we had hoped to see resolved, first, by the mobilization of Africans themselves, and later by that of the international community. That is the case with the Western Sahara, where the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara has been deployed for more than 15 years. It is also the case in Somalia, where the African Union Mission has clearly been unable to provide the conditions necessary for resolving the security, political and humanitarian aspects of the situation.
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> "The implementation of a peace and security architecture of the African Union, including a mechanism for the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts, the Peace and Security Council and a council of elders — reflects Africa's resolve

responsibility for itself and to act in favour of political solutions that integrate the values of conciliation and reconciliation and ensure the sustainability of agreements reached.

"I hope that this high-level Security Council debate will represent a decisive step towards strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union. Such cooperation, based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, could give rise to innovative modes of operation. In that respect, it would be extremely useful for us to adopt a more ambitious interpretation of Chapter VIII of the Charter, which is the legal basis for peacekeeping operations led by regional organizations. Such an interpretation could take account of local realities and favour responses adapted to specific contexts and characteristics, with a clear view of each party's respective responsibilities and complementarities.

"It is indeed important that the as yet unexploited potential for synergy, interaction and coordination of cooperation between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations be fully achieved. There is no doubt whatsoever that a successful synthesis of regional and subregional efforts with the activities of the international community will allow us to mobilize all the energy necessary to achieving goals that serve the cause of peace.

"In that context, as soon as it is approved by the Security Council, a peacekeeping operation on the African continent should be treated in the same way as operations led by the United Nations, particularly in terms of the management and disbursement of funding, which should be adequate and regular. The time has come to institutionalize funding and to move beyond the ad hoc approach of some financing that makes it difficult to plan and manage such missions.

"If we are to lay such uncertainties to rest once and for all, we should consider funding mechanisms that are more consistent and better coordinated. In that respect, the path laid out in January 2007 by the heads of State of the African Union — which consists of organizing missions that are led by the Union, agreed with the Security Council, and funded by assessed contributions of United Nations Member States in the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter — should be endorsed and implemented as soon as possible. Such an approach would allow us sustainably to overcome the significant funding constraints facing Africa. It would help to enhance the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations and to reassert the authority and credibility of the Security Council in its supervision of regional initiatives, which would then be undertaken with clear objectives, effectively and in the certainty that funds would be put to best use, to the satisfaction of the international community as a whole."

Having read out President Bouteflika's message, I should like very briefly to add two comments on behalf of the delegation of Algeria.

First, we support the statement made by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, the current Chairman of the African Union, and endorse the proposal he made on behalf of Africa.

Secondly, Algeria pays homage to the personal efforts of President Mbeki to convene this meeting and to draw up the draft resolution that has been submitted to the Security Council. Such a commitment on his part is a tribute to his country, South Africa. It does honour to Africa. On behalf of President Bouteflika, we thank him very warmly.

The President: I now call on Her Excellency Mrs. Laure Olga Gondjout, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, Francophonie and Regional Integration of Gabon.

Mrs. Gondjout (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the President of the Gabonese Republic, His Excellency Mr. El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba, whom I have the honour to represent here, I would like to say how pleased our delegation and I myself are to see Mr. Mbeki presiding over this high-level meeting on the role of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

As the Council knows, the President of the Gabonese Republic is very interested in questions related to international peace and security, particularly in Africa. He thus fully supports the initiative that the Council presidency has taken to organize this meeting to examine questions related to the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council can be

assured of his solidarity with the resulting recommendations.

The report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security (S/2008/186) has proposed interesting paths for reflection on strengthening cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

While today we have reasons to be pleased with developments in recent years in this area, particularly in Africa, we must acknowledge that a great deal remains to be done so that this cooperation can have more solid content. With a constant and significant contribution to United Nations peacekeeping operations and to our own, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, Africa has shown its will and capacity to mobilize for the resolution of conflicts and crises that threaten collective security. That is the case with the African peacekeeping mission in Burundi, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the recent African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

The President of the Gabonese Republic, in consultation with his peers in the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), is contributing to the search for solutions to the crises in the subregion. As Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Situation in the Central African Republic, he encourages consultations and inclusive dialogue to reach political and economic stabilization of that country.

The President of the Gabonese Republic has also been active in the deployment of the Multinational Force of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (FOMUC). The same is true of the case of Chad, where Gabon is working for an inclusive dialogue between the various stakeholders.

Gabon is also in the contact group to follow up the Dakar agreement signed on 13 March 2008 between Chad and the Sudan at the initiative of President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal. The group held its the first meeting of Foreign Ministers in Libreville on 10 April 2008. Another meeting of the contact group, this time at the level of experts on defence, security and intelligence, will be held in Tripoli, Libya at the end of this month to consider and plan for the rapid establishment, with the support of the United Nations and the European Union, of a surveillance force at the border between Chad and the Sudan.

Unfortunately, all of these African initiatives come up against the insufficiency of resources, in particular with regard to financing, human and institutional capacity-building and peacebuilding. Because of this, my country supports the Secretary-General's proposal to quickly create a panel of eminent experts for an in-depth consideration of predictable and stable financing of peacekeeping operations initiated by regional organizations.

Capacity-building in preventive diplomacy is another area of concern, which was addressed in resolution 1625 (2005) of 14 September 2005. From that perspective, joint mediation and good offices missions could help defuse the brewing conflicts and crises.

On a completely different topic, Gabon would like to launch a strong appeal to the international community for assistance to developing countries facing increases in food prices, which could produce socio-economic troubles likely to degenerate into lasting crises.

I express the wish that the resolution to be adopted at the end of this debate will strengthen the framework for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, the African Union in particular, in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sierra Leone, Her Excellency Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura.

Mrs. Bangura (Sierra Leone): At the outset, I would like to convey the sincere appreciation of His Excellency Mr. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, for the invitation extended to him to participate in this debate. While also congratulating President Thabo Mbeki on conceiving this laudable initiative, allow me to convey President Koroma's profound regret for his inability to be personally present to contribute to this all-important subject, due to compelling preoccupations at home.

My gratitude also goes to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report to the Security Council

on this subject (S/2008/186) and the recommendations therein.

The remarkable talent and ability of President Mbeki, coupled with his consummate experience, convince us that we can exude pride and confidence that his special talents can be brought to bear on the proceedings of this meeting.

Partnership and cooperation provide the opportunity to tap into the comparative advantages of the United Nations and regional stakeholders to respectively contribute to addressing threats to international peace and security. Thus a concerted effort in managing, resolving and preventing conflicts constitutes a vital ingredient for international peace, security and prosperity.

As a nation that has emerged from a protracted conflict and that is still grappling with the effects of that menace, Sierra Leone is a living testimony to the critical importance of a regional approach to conflict resolution and prevention. The historic decision by Security Council in resolution 1181 (1998), in welcoming and recognizing the important contribution of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in support of Sierra Leone Government's efforts to re-establish effective administration and the democratic process and to embark on the task of national reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation, is a clear demonstration of the imperative of these partnerships.

With two thirds of the world's poorest countries, Africa has experienced a myriad of civil conflicts that resulted in abject poverty and socio-economic exclusion. Efforts by the African Union (AU) and subregional organizations such as ECOWAS in establishing mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution — particularly the crisis situations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire and the Darfur region in the Sudan — clearly demonstrate the willingness and commitment of the continent to take on its responsibility for peace, security and stability in the continent.

Despite positive trends and advances with regard to obtaining durable peace in Africa, the conditions required for sustainable development have yet to be consolidated throughout the continent. Thus, these efforts can yield dividends only through the cooperation and support of the international community, based on the principle of mutual respect and trust. There is therefore an urgent need to intensify and harmonize national, regional and international efforts in order to develop African human and institutional capacities, particularly in countries emerging from conflict.

The need to support those countries in getting back on their feet is more than imperative, and it involves peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy. We know only too well the challenges faced by post-conflict countries after years of civil strife. Such countries, often fragile and reeling under the weight of poverty, are usually not equal to the Herculean task of rebuilding what has been scarred by years of devastation. Supporting those countries in order to heal the wounds of conflict is, in itself, an antidote that could stabilize them as well as prevent them from sliding down the thorny path that leads to renewed conflict.

It is in that light that we applaud and greatly appreciate the efforts and engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission regarding countries like ours, grappling with post-conflict reconstruction. We trust that the call for close collaboration between the Peacebuilding Commission and the AU Standing Multidimensional Committee could be strengthened through regular consultation and coordination. The abundant resources that we muster for intervention and peacekeeping operations could be significantly reduced if we heavily invest in preventive diplomacy, by tackling the root causes of conflicts upstream. Thus, a stitch in time saves nine.

In order to accomplish that goal, the United Nations system should adapt itself to the transformations and developments that the continent is currently experiencing, particularly in the context of the evolving structures and programmes of the AU. In the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the AU and subregional organizations have devised mechanisms to strengthen their peacekeeping capacity and to take the lead in peacekeeping operations on the continent. Those ongoing efforts require close collaboration and coordination between the United Nations and the AU.

In concluding, I wish to emphasize that, in the promotion of international peace and security, the real challenge lies in strengthening partnership and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union. That

also calls for implementation of the relevant mandates of the General Assembly and the Security Council and highlights the need for the United Nations and the international community to provide further support to the AU in the following ways.

First, the AU Peace Fund should be replenished, and flexible, predictable and sustainable financing should be ensured for AU peacekeeping operations so that they can expedite or step up troop deployment in peacekeeping operations. Secondly, the initiatives of the African Union and subregional organizations to prevent, mediate and resolve conflicts with the assistance of the United Nations should be encouraged and supported. Thirdly, cooperation with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) should be strengthened by providing coherent support for its programmes through the mobilization of internal and external financial resources. Fourthly, the individual and collective efforts of African countries should be supplemented so that agricultural productivity can be increased in a sustainable way, in order to ensure food security in the context of NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. Finally, a well-structured multi-stakeholder post-conflict peacebuilding programme that has clearly defined and coordinated roles for each partner should be established.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Majozi Sithole, Minister of Finance of Swaziland, to take the floor.

Mr. Sithole (Swaziland): I wish at the outset to join all those who have spoken before me in congratulating South Africa on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. I also wish to commend the initiative that your delegation has taken, Madam President, in convening this very historic meeting. We fully support you in this initiative.

The Swaziland delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security (S/2008/186).

The preparation of the report signifies the importance of the subject matter. Over the past few years, experience has shown that regional organizations play a significant role in the maintenance of international peace and security. The importance of that role emanates from the fact that regional organizations have a comparative advantage over the Security Council when it comes to understanding the nature of the conflicts obtaining in a particular region, by reason of proximity. Even the Charter of the United Nations recognizes the importance of regional organizations, in its Chapter VIII.

While it is recognized that it is the primary responsibility of the Security Council to maintain international peace and security, the Council cannot carry out that mandate in isolation. That highlights the importance of the need to strengthen and deepen the relations between the United Nations and regional organizations in order to effectively maintain international peace and security.

Close collaboration between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council can significantly improve the handling of the conflict situations in Africa. The challenges faced by the African Union in its efforts aimed at conflict prevention, management and resolution are daunting. All too often, the African Union has had to initiate its own missions in conflict areas because the United Nations has not been able to deploy peacekeeping missions there. Even after peacekeeping operations have been authorized by the Security Council, the United Nations has been slow in operationalizing such missions.

The frustration experienced by the African Union emanates mainly from a lack of the resources it requires to operationalize its initiatives. It is therefore imperative to establish a mechanism that would provide funding in a predictable, flexible and sustainable manner for the long-term planning of peacekeeping missions. In that regard, we welcome the timely proposal contained in the report of the Secretary-General that a high-level panel be established to study the funding situation and to come up with modalities for how it should be done.

Swaziland wishes to align itself with the statement of the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, which we fully support. We urge that the exercise by the high-level panel be conducted expeditiously. We believe that it would not be an academic exercise, because we are talking about human lives here. We also welcome the progress made in the operationalization of the peace architecture of

the African Union. We look forward to the continued support of the international community in that regard.

The importance of strengthening relations between the United Nations and the African Union cannot be overemphasized. Let us look forward to its success.

Finally, I wish to join colleagues who have spoken before me in saying the following. Let us keep our eyes on the problems that we are currently facing. The food prices that continue to escalate every day have the potential to cause problems and uprisings in our countries.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Dieudonné Kombo Yaya, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Central African Republic, to take the floor.

Mr. Kombo Yaya (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): Permit me to convey to you, Madam President, the regrets of His Excellency Mr. François Bozizé, President of the Republic and Head of State, who, because of other commitments, could not personally take part in this meeting on cooperation between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. He remains convinced that, under your country's presidency, the Security Council will further strengthen its cooperation with the African Union Peace and Security Council.

The African architecture in the area of conflict prevention, management and resolution is the outcome of the commitment of our heads of State or Government, first within the former Organization of African Unity and then within today's African Union (AU), to ensure that peace and security — which are, moreover, inseparable — are the top priority, because without peace there can be no economic and social development. The relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Constitutive Act of the African Union emphasize that point quite clearly.

We welcome the active cooperation between our two organizations in the area of peacekeeping. There are many examples in that regard. I need not refer to them in detail, as most of those who have spoken before me have eloquently cited numerous examples of the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union. However, I would like to emphasize in particular the need to strengthen the capacity of subregional organizations with conflict settlement mechanisms, such as the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa. Such bodies work at the grass-roots level, play a basic and crucial role in the settlement of conflicts and should rely on the African Union only as a last resort. We therefore welcome the proposal of the Secretary-General for the establishment of a joint United Nations-African Union group of experts to consider in detail how to support the peacekeeping operations of subregional organizations, especially in terms of funding.

I should like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my President, to commend Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his support for the establishment of a regional office for the Great Lakes region of Central Africa.

In the light of the new situation, enhancing the capacity of the African Union also continues to be a priority. As you are aware, Madam President, the Central African Republic is a post-conflict country that is trying to emerge from two decades of ongoing crisis. Any effort aimed at re-establishing and strengthening peace should take into account the economic situation in the country, because extreme poverty, hunger and the precarious state of our people's health constitute fertile ground for instability.

I should like to take this opportunity to welcome the joint efforts made by the African Union through the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic, including the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Chairman of the African Union, in order to bring about reconciliation in Central Africa, including the work done to prepare for the inclusive dialogue, which came to an end on 31 March and which will open up the way for the dialogue to take place very soon.

In conclusion, we fully support the draft resolution put forward by your country, Madam President, which opens up new horizons for our continent.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Chief Ojo Maduekwe, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Envoy of the President of Nigeria, to take the floor.

Mr. Maduekwe (Nigeria): On behalf of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, may I commend South Africa's initiative in bringing this crucial subject before the Security Council. By the same token, I commend Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his

comprehensive report on the issue. The report is pertinent not only in terms of its proposals for prospective cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union (AU), but also in proffering targeted recommendations to improve that partnership. We are pleased with the effort of the Secretary-General and agree with his viewpoint that there are outstanding questions about the nature of the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, including the AU, that need to be clarified.

African problems are truly global problems, in ways that grim statistics render more disturbingly challenging than the current pace of global response would suggest, especially in the area of funding, despite the untiring best efforts of the Secretary-General. Nigeria therefore fully endorses this debate, as it affords us an opportunity to redefine and realign the major strands of the evolving strategic partnership between the AU and the United Nations. Indeed, the foundations of the functional relationship we seek between the United Nations and the AU are rooted in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and in the Constitutive Act of the African Union. In a global village, one cannot afford unsafe compounds; it is too close for comfort.

Regional organizations like the AU are uniquely placed to tackle threats to regional peace and security. Nigeria recognizes the efficacy of complementarities and partnerships in that regard. That is part of the reason that we have been steadfast in our commitment to the United Nations, the AU and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States.

We believe that this debate, which comes at a time of reduced shooting wars in Africa, serves to energize a momentum which we should build upon. On its part, the African Union has sufficiently demonstrated political will for the peaceful resolution of the continent's problems. What is now required is for the international community to put its money where its mouth is.

I would like to conclude by calling for very close cooperation between the United Nations and the AU in drafting a resolution that will not only meet the challenges of today but address our dreams for tomorrow, namely, that of a more peaceful world underpinned by an ever-closer partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union. I am confident that we can achieve that objective. But that will be difficult if the United Nations continues to ignore the wisdom of the African proverb that says that you do not shave a man's head in his absence. If close to 60 per cent of the Security Council's time is devoted to African issues, and Africa is the only continent not represented on the Security Council in the permanent category, how can the United Nations make progress on the issue of African ownership of its own problems and solutions without addressing that imbalance?

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Ronnie Shikapwasha, Minister for Home Affairs and Special Envoy of Zambia, to take the floor.

Mr. Shikapwasha (Zambia): First of all, I would like to commend South Africa for its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, which comes at a momentous period in the affairs of the African continent.

With regard to peace and security on the continent, Africa continues to grapple with intractable peace and security situations in many parts of the continent. South Africa's presidency is therefore a further confirmation of the confidence of the international community in the leadership and role that South Africa continues to play in the various conflicts and their resolution. South Africa's role has in many ways enhanced Africa's initiatives in the resolution of some of Africa's long-standing conflicts. In that regard, the convening of this meeting is relevant in our attempt to find solutions to Africa's raging conflicts. This meeting also comes at a time when the international community is seeking to partner with the African Union to find solutions to Africa's flashpoints. Finally, South Africa's presidency also comes at a time when the world is looking to the continent to assume greater responsibility for its own human condition arising from conflict situations.

While we recognize the centrality of the Security Council in the maintenance of peace and security, the evolution of conflicts and their management has thrust new responsibilities on the African continent, and indeed the African Union (AU). Africa's willingness to find solutions to some of the hard conflicts has increased Africa's role in the finding of solutions to those conflicts on behalf of the international community, especially the Security Council.

Africa continues to suffer from a lack of resources and capacity to secure lasting solutions to the continent's conflicts. There is a need, therefore, to develop and work on mechanisms with the United Nations system to enhance the provision of predictable and sustainable resources to Africa's efforts in finding solutions to its conflicts. The United Nations efforts in that respect should include the funding of peace operations, especially that related to start-up financing for equipment and logistics.

Zambia supports in that regard the amendment of United Nations rules on peacekeeping budgets to finance regional operations authorized by the Security Council. As regards the deployment and management of African Union-led peace support operations, Zambia recommends for consideration at this meeting that such operations be funded through United Nations assessed contributions. Considering the importance of resources to the success of AU missions — and indeed, to those of the United Nations — it is proposed that an in-depth analysis of the current financial outlays to peace missions also be made.

While financial resources are cardinal to positive outcomes in conflict zones, Zambia would support cooperative mechanisms that ensure human dignity based on the development of coherent strategies and policies that would protect civilians in armed conflicts. Zambia would, in that respect, support early warning systems that anticipate human-made social, political and economic upheavals which are the precursors of Africa's conflicts.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Senegal.

Mr. Gadio (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of President Abdoulaye Wade of the Republic of Senegal, whom it is my honour to represent, I should like at the outset warmly to congratulate South Africa and President Thabo Mbeki on having again this year convened an open Security Council debate on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security. I should also like to commend the leadership of President Kikwete of Tanzania, the acting Chairman of the African Union.

The interest that all Member States have shown in today's debate is justified by the complex nature of conflict situations in Africa and throughout the world. That complexity requires synergy and dynamic interaction between the United Nations, which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and regional organizations, which are a complementary tool to the activities of the Organization. In that respect, Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter clearly sets out the modalities for cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations.

In that regard, we should welcome the high quality of the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations. That partnership is all the more necessary given that Africa contributes almost 35 per cent of contingents and hosts almost half of all peacekeeping operations, including the largest and most complex. In that respect, at their 2006 summit, the heads of State and Government of the African Union called on the United Nations to consider, within the framework of Chapter VII of the Charter, the possibility of funding, through contributions by its Member States, peacekeeping operations deployed by the African Union or under its authority, with the consent of the United Nations.

That invitation demonstrates the resolve of African leaders to take responsibility for conflicts as soon as they break out and to intervene relatively quickly when the United Nations cannot do so. The case of Darfur is a perfect illustration of that approach. However, as all are aware, Africa does not always have the necessary resources to assume such a burden, nor does it always remain concretely engaged by providing, quantitatively and qualitatively, the forces necessary to the success of its interventions. The case of Darfur also raises the issue of striking a balance between the urgent need to act to stop atrocities and due respect for the initiatives of such regional organizations as the African Union.

African solutions for African problems represent a noble and praiseworthy approach, but they should not add to the unbearable suffering of the victims of conflicts in Africa. In the face of the urgency that has been recognized by the United Nations and the African Union, action needs to be taken immediately.

The delicate issue of funding arose during the operations in the three African missions in Burundi, Somalia and Darfur. It should be considered in depth so that we can find a solution. Any solution should,

however, take equal account of the start-up phase of missions and their long-term viability.

There is a similar concern with regard to implementing the key provision of the Dakar Accord between Chad and the Sudan concerning the peace and security force to monitor the long common border between those brotherly countries. The Dakar Accord — concluded on 13 March 2008 in the presence of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairman of the African Union Commission, and with the strong support of the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and all the States of the Islamic ummah — needs important logistic and financial resources if it is to be successful. Senegal therefore strongly supports the proposal contained in paragraph 76 of the Secretary-General's report of 7 April 2008 on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The greatest attention should be given to strengthening African peacekeeping capacities, particularly in terms of planning and managing training operations for civilian, military and police personnel, as well as logistical support. Regional organizations, in particular the African Union, should have the ability to be more alert to potential conflicts so as to be able to avert them and to take all necessary measures, in close collaboration with the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council.

We need to make better use of preventive diplomacy and strategic anticipation if we are to be able to fulfil our commitments. The entire world is listening to the African continent today, as for instance with regard to the electoral processes in Zimbabwe and, earlier, in Kenya. Unfortunately, we Africans have answered only with a deafening silence that can be heard everywhere. In establishing its council of elders, the African Union has understood and recognized that conflicts, be they dormant or active, can be resolved only by political means — in other words, negotiation, early warning and good offices.

In closing, I would insist on the need for the international community to take urgent measures to address the humanitarian crises sorely afflicting many States in Africa and throughout the world, as reflected in the brilliant plea made this morning by the leaders of the African Union Commission.

The President: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Rosemary Museminali, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Rwanda.

Ms. Museminali (Rwanda): The Rwandan delegation applauds the initiative of President Mbeki of South Africa to strengthen the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union (AU), in the maintenance of peace and international security. More particularly, it could not have come at a more appropriate time than at this moment, when people all over the world are remembering the over 1 million Rwandans who lost their lives 14 years ago in circumstances that could have been prevented or halted later on. This forum thus offers us an opportunity to review mechanisms by which we can prevent and effectively intervene in future conflicts in Africa and other parts of the world with greater coherence and effectiveness.

What we need to do is direct our efforts towards creating a mechanism that will address effective and efficient coordination of both organizations in order to deliver peace and security where it is needed most: in conflict areas. AU member countries have taken up their responsibility. They have shown goodwill and a readiness and willingness to actively engage in peacekeeping and security maintenance, mainly on the African continent but also in other parts of the world. What we expect from the Security Council, which is mandated by the Charter to maintain international peace and security, is the realistic, timely and predictable provision of adequate resources to accomplish those missions. Timely intervention has been hampered by the inefficient provision of resources, which in turn leads to missions being ineffective.

AU member countries are capable of raising sizable numbers of professional military and police personnel for peacekeeping, but they are still largely incapable of properly equipping them. The United Nations therefore needs to agree to effectively maintain its central role of sustaining peacekeeping forces in conflict areas by equipping them effectively and by making available the logistical support they need to perform their duties.

In our view, this meeting offers us an opportunity to forge a greater mutual partnership to address regional conflicts by putting in place a joint team from both organizations to work together to deal with

practical issues that have hampered our effectiveness in the past. We are grateful that this has been provided for in the draft resolution before the Council.

Greater participation by regional organizations in conflict resolution needs to be tapped more and more, given the fact that those regional organizations have greater proximity to conflict areas and a better appreciation of the political and cultural issues. Therefore, it is urgent to institutionalize relations between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly the African Union, in the areas of conflict resolution and peacekeeping by building the AU's capacity to implement initiatives that are in fact possible but that seem impossible at current resource levels.

My delegation therefore wishes to propose, inter alia, the following measures, some of which have already been mentioned by other delegations. We wish also to support all the proposals set out in the draft resolution before the Council. These measures include the following.

First, AU peace and security measures taken to resolve conflicts should be considered pivotal and should be reinforced and supported by the Security Council.

Secondly, we feel that the United Nations should work on more predictable ways to fund peacekeeping operations. More reliable funding should be considered through assessed contributions by Member States, because we find that these resources are more predictable and therefore facilitate better planning and contribute to greater efficiency. Current fundraising measures need to be reviewed.

Thirdly, as most African nations willing to contribute to United Nations peacekeeping operations do not have the matching resources, we feel that, whenever regional organizations undertake peace and security roles, the United Nations should work out ways to immediately prepare light and heavy support packages to ease the transition from operations by regional organizations to United Nations operations, in order to avoid the costly delays that have plagued some of the missions in the region, such as those in Somalia and Darfur. Consider how much the former African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) — the current African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) — would have been able to achieve with better mobility, better logistics and well-paid, well-fed forces provided with proper health care.

Rwanda is happy to contribute to the promotion of international peace and security through its military and police contributions to United Nations and African Union peacekeeping missions in the Sudan, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Comoros and Haiti. We are committed to continuing these contributions for as long as they are required, and as our meagre financial resources permit.

We are committed to this quest for a working partnership to spread peace because, more than anybody else, we have tasted the lack of peace and security, and we know what the lack of peace means for a country and a region. The failure to address the threat posed by genocidal forces such as the members of the former Rwandan Armed Forces and Interahamwe, also known as the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda, has perpetuated conflict in the Great Lakes region. My delegation therefore welcomes the recent adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1804 (2008), which aims to address the threat posed by those forces not only to Rwanda but also to the entire Great Lakes region. Any delay in the response to this threat undermines us all. It allows the international supporters of those forces to increase their activities of destabilization, which are manifested in the current blatant activities and international conferences aimed at genocide denial. Genocide denial, as a last stage of the implementation of the genocidal ideology, is a formidable threat to peace and security, as it energizes perpetration.

We all need to watch out for masked political manoeuvres aimed at undermining peace and stability. This poses a serious threat to peace and security, and we urge the Security Council and regional organizations to discourage and deal with the threat. Today in Rwanda we face a situation where, ironically, those who stopped the 1994 genocide are being labelled as perpetrators by those seeking to manipulate the international system; these allegations are based on misinformation provided by perpetrators still at large or by their sympathizers.

Our painful experience in Rwanda taught us that peace comes at a huge price. There can be no peace without reconciliation and without recognition of the rights and interests of all people, including the right of States to exist and the right of self-determination. We

have learned that no community's rights can or should supersede another's. We have learned the value of sharing, the value of communities finding and consciously forging ways to promote living side by side in peace and mutual respect. It is these initiatives that this joint meeting needs to recognize; it needs to enhance mechanisms to help nurture and enhance long-lasting peace and stability.

In conclusion, I express the hope that the outcome of this meeting will be a firm and clear mechanism to strengthen the mechanisms for institutionalizing relations between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly the African Union, in the crucial areas of conflict resolution and peacekeeping. Once again, an opportunity is before us to translate our many challenges and opportunities into a shared destiny of peace, security and prosperity for all.

The President: I invite the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Angola, His Excellency Mr. João Bernando de Miranda, to take the floor.

Mr. Miranda (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): I would like to start by conveying our appreciation to the President for holding this high-level meeting on peace and security in Africa. I am greatly honoured to participate in this forum on behalf of the President of the Republic of Angola, His Excellency José Eduardo dos Santos, who for unavoidable reasons could not travel to New York.

Allow me to congratulate the President, on behalf of my Government and on my own behalf, for the wise manner in which he has been conducting the work of the Security Council, especially for the opportunity and pertinence of including in its agenda an issue that is vital to its good performance, and that is matters related to peace and security in Africa. I would also like to express my appreciation to the previous Council President for the constructive manner in which he, together with the Secretary-General, contributed to the realization of this important high-level meeting, which takes place at a juncture when both the United Nations and the African Union (AU) are confronting multiple and complex challenges linked to peace and development in the African continent.

On the occasion of the 2007 Security Council meeting on the same topic, under the French presidency (*5749th meeting*), the Council recognized, among other aspects, the fundamental role of regional and subregional organizations in the prevention and resolution of conflicts on the basis Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, as well as of Council resolutions 1625 (2005) and 1631 (2005), to which we can add presidential statement 2005/39. The Council reiterated the importance of the relevant paragraphs of the Outcome Document of the 2005 Summit, General Assembly resolution 60/1, on the need for development aid for Africa and strengthening the African Union's operational capacity for peacekeeping operations for a 10-year period.

Africa is aware that the principal causes for the conflicts in the continent have a direct relationship with circumstances resulting from the complexity of its ethnic and linguistic phenomena. However, they are also fundamentally linked to the underdevelopment that is a consequence of the undeniable legacy of a long period of colonization that dramatically marked the course of its history. It is in that context that the AU, along with subregional economic communities, has been deeply engaged in the operationalization of its peace and security structures and mechanisms, namely the African Standby Force, the early warning system, the Panel of the Wise and the Special Fund for peace and security.

We understand that in order for the United Nations and the AU to be able to adequately counter the constraints on the efficiency of the necessary cooperation in the domain of conflict prevention, management and resolution, it is of the utmost necessity to address the issues of peace and security in an inclusive manner, not dissociating them from development problems. The convergence of those elements is fundamental for the success of peacekeeping operations. That is one of the lessons we learned while following and observing certain conflict resolution, peace consolidation and economic reconstruction processes as the first Chairman of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, in 2006 and 2007.

As we have already mentioned, peace and social development are correlated elements that complement one another. Having achieved peace, the Republic of Angola has been undertaking enormous efforts to create subjective and material conditions for its reconstruction, with a view to reaching sustained development. The accomplishments of my Government have deserved the recognition of all the Angolan

society and the international community, in light of the tangible results already reached in the recovery of the economic and social infrastructure destroyed during the war and in the construction of new infrastructure. Judging from the positive trend in our economic growth, which is above of 19 per cent, our perspectives are, frankly, encouraging.

It is in this perspective that the Angolan Government conceived and is implementing the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction in order to reach the human development indicators set out in the Millennium Declaration. Our experience has demonstrated that in the African context, the consolidation of peace results from the combination of various factors such as the conception and implementation of a coherent policy of national reconciliation, the implementation of economic reforms that favour the provision of ample space for free initiative on the part of national and foreign citizens, the constant reinforcement of State authority as an imperative for the consolidation of democratic institutions, and respect for and safeguarding of human rights as a component of peace, democracy and development, among others.

Indeed, under the able leadership of the President of the Republic, José Eduardo dos Santos, Angola has been removing the hurdles that hindered the smile of its people. Today, only six years after the end of the internal conflict that lacerated the country for several decades, peace and national reconciliation are consolidated, and with them democracy, whose consecration will be strengthened with the holding, for the second time in the history of Angola, of the legislative and presidential elections foreseen for 2008 and 2009, respectively.

The Republic of Angola reiterates, therefore, its firm commitment to working in a self-sacrificing and altruistic manner in the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, and in the subregional organizations of which it is a member, towards helping to find peaceful solutions for the conflicts that still persist in certain countries of our continent. To that effect, my Government considers the cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations to be of extreme importance.

I would like to state that my delegation will support the deliberative text that will result from our debate.

The President: I now invite the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the President of Egypt, Mr. Ibrahim Ali Hassan, to take the floor.

Mr. Hassan (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to convey the greetings of His Excellency President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak and his wishes for the full success of this summit. We would also like to extend our thanks and appreciation to His Excellency President Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, for his constructive initiative in calling for this important meeting at this high level to discuss one of the most important issues of concern for Africa and the world.

I am confident we all agree on the high priority that the issue of peace and security represents on the international list of concerns and on the agenda for African collective action. This matter was clearly reflected in devising the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU) in 2001 and earlier in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, in 1963. The issue of peace and security in the African continent also comes at the forefront in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) document, which considered it a necessary precondition for achieving comprehensive development in the continent, hence emphasizing the firm correlation between the promotion of peace and security on the one side and the efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals on the other.

In this context, the African Union has been keen on establishing institutions and mechanisms that are capable of dealing, both seriously and effectively, with conflict situations in Africa. Efforts have not been confined only to the establishment of the African Union Peace and Security Council, which plays a crucial role in promoting security, stability and in dispute settlement in the continent; they also extend to the establishment of the African Standby Force, the Panel of the Wise, a Peace Fund and a continental early warning system, along with a comprehensive political framework for reconstruction and rehabilitation in countries emerging from conflict. That rendered the AU highly capable of taking rapid and effective actions to contain existing conflicts and avert the emergence of new ones. As a result, many conflicts were resolved within the past few years, bringing the number down from 12 at the beginning of this century to a limited number, for which efforts are under way to find peaceful settlements.

The NEPAD initiative was launched in tandem with the establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism in order to consolidate the pillars of good economic and political governance, in fulfilment of the aspirations of the peoples of the continent for a promising future based on solidarity and integration and arising from the principle of African national ownership, stressing that the future of Africa will be built by the Africans themselves.

Despite the numerous developments and the continuing changes on the regional and international scenes — which all reaffirm the need for further cooperation and consultation between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council — we still lack the institutional mechanism needed to consolidate such cooperation in a specific framework that commits to the historical, cultural and developmental particularities of the African States. Such a framework must take into consideration the delicate balance agreed upon in the 2005 United Nations Summit between the issues of peace and security, economic and social development and respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the African citizen.

At an early stage Egypt discerned the dire need to bolster the cooperation between the United Nations and the AU. To that end, Egypt proposed, during its presidency of the African Union Peace and Security Council in December 2006, its well-known initiative to establish a Coordination and Consultation Mechanism between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council. We would like to place on record our appreciation for the warm welcome and interest with which the Egyptian initiative was received and for the progress achieved in its invigoration through joint sessions of the two organs.

Furthermore, Egypt emphasizes the need to promote cooperation and consultation between the peace and security structures on both sides through exchanging information and reports between the two Councils, dispatching fact-finding missions or conducting joint missions. In addition, there is a need to speedily adopt the appropriate norms and to agree on the necessary conditions by which to consider African peacekeeping missions as United Nations missions and to provide the necessary funding. Such coordination should also expand to include the various African subregional arrangements, as they play a vital role in dispute settlement and maintaining peace and security in the continent through their active regional mechanisms.

Moreover, there is a much-needed constructive cooperation between the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Conference in maintaining international peace and security. We wish to highlight in this respect the ongoing cooperation between the AU and the subregional economic groups and the increasing coordination between the AU and the League of Arab States to achieve security and stability in Africa and to contribute jointly to the settlement of existing conflicts in a number of African States, such as the Sudan, Somalia and the Comoros, etc. We salute the summit decisions on both sides, as they reveal how highly they value the cooperation between them, and underscore the need to carry on their efforts to reinforce peace and security in Africa.

In the light of its responsibilities towards the AU and the United Nations, Egypt has steadily been keen on actively participating in peacekeeping operations, most recently through its broad participation in the Hybrid Operation in Darfur. Within the framework of capacity-building in preventive diplomacy, it has established the regional Cairo Center for Training on Conflict Resolution and Peacekeeping in Africa, which since 1995 has been organizing regular training courses for African diplomatic and military cadres to enable them to gain the necessary capabilities in the field.

Furthermore, Egypt attaches great importance to the issue of peacebuilding and reconstruction in the area, especially in countries emerging from conflict. In the context of its membership in the Peacebuilding Commission, Egypt is eager to elevate the standards of those efforts so as to reach a situation that would magnify the benefits derived from the international and regional financial institutions and to serve the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction in those States.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming that Egypt is keen to continue to advance its role in the African continent. It is committed to continue and reinforce its contributions in peacekeeping operations, settling disputes and achieving security and stability in the continent. I reaffirm our confidence that the resolution to be adopted by this summit will positively contribute to consolidating the pillars of cooperation, coordination and complementarity between the efforts

of the United Nations on one hand and the pivotal role undertaken by the AU and other regional organizations on the other, towards fulfilling the aspirations and ambitions of our peoples in a safe world where we all live in peace, freedom and prosperity.

The President: I next invite the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia, Her Excellency Madam Olubanke King-Akerele, to take the floor.

Madam King-Akerele (Liberia): It is an honour to address this body, representing Her Excellency the President of Liberia, Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. She was unable to be here as she would have liked. On her behalf, we want to congratulate South Africa on its presidency of the Security Council, while commending the Council on this initiative. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his very thought-provoking report and the proposals contained therein.

I wish to state here that Liberia is an example par excellence of what can be accomplished through a combination of a regional initiative — in our case, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which took the high road in intervening in the Liberian crises in the 1990s — and then the international community, through the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in the following years.

Let me begin by referring to the intervention of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General to Liberia, Ellen Margrethe Løj, who addressed the Council on 14 April (*5864th meeting*) and to brief it on the status of developments in Liberia. Having benefited and continuing to benefit from an extraordinary United Nations presence through UNMIL, which combines a range of peacekeeping forces representative of the United Nations membership, we remain most grateful for that role. The peace we enjoy today is largely attributable to their presence, as well as to the fact that ECOWAS laid the foundations in the 1990s. Indeed, many of our ECOWAS brothers have paid dearly for that peace.

Given the fragility of that peace — the reasons for which were detailed by Ms. Løj — it is clear that there is still much to be done if we are to achieve sustainable peace and security. Hence the subtitle of my intervention on the issue before us today: "No sustainable security without development; no development without sustainable security".

If we are to have an enhanced and meaningful relationship between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council, that perspective must guide us. I now want to focus on a few specifics.

The objectives of the AU Peace and Security Council include the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa, the anticipation and prevention of conflict and the promotion of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. In the letter dated 8 April from the Permanent Representative of South Africa addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the concept paper (S/2008/229), it is indicated that today's debate will provide an opportunity to address, at the highest political level, the complex nature of some current conflicts and the need to respond in a timely manner to threats, taking into account factors such as the capacity — and, at times, the limitations — of regional organizations. Here, I want to underscore the word "threats".

Liberia wishes to submit that the growing food crisis is not only a worldwide crisis, but is also proving to be a major security issue for the continent. It is a serious threat to peace and security that could undermine the gains that are being made throughout the continent if it is not addressed urgently. A recent *Jeune Afrique* article refers to it as a food crisis that is spreading like wildfire. Thus, protests have been sparked throughout the continent, from Morocco to Mauritania and Senegal and from Côte d'Ivoire to Mozambique, Tunisia, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Egypt and Tunisia. This speaks for itself.

Surely that is sufficient warning: we can ill afford to wait. Liberia proposes high-level attention and the holding, on an urgent basis, of a special meeting of the Security Council on the food crisis. We further propose that we join forces, bringing together the expertise of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the African Union and relevant food-producing countries in Asia and food-importing countries in Africa and elsewhere to tackle this matter within the shortest time possible. We believe that, on this issue, we need the equivalent of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security.

In addition, this situation will undermine one of the key Millennium Development Goals, related to improving food security. This is a major security

matter that needs to be tackled. It is at the core of the economics of insecurity, with which we all must be concerned if we are to achieve sustainable security.

Next, I would like to refer to Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. It is an excellent example of an important Security Council resolution that is being considered and implemented at the local and national levels in many African countries, including my own. That resolution has now been adopted in the context of an African Union declaration of heads of State. However, we need a mechanism for monitoring its implementation, and we urge the Security Council to look into that. We are pleased that, in response to the resolution, the Secretary-General has appointed a woman as his Special Representative for Liberia. Indeed, we believe that Liberia could be used as a case in point in the implementation of the resolution. Plans are under way for the Presidents of Finland and Liberia to convene a meeting in 2009 on women and international peace and security, within the framework of the resolution.

I would now like to highlight the importance of collaboration between the African Union and the United Nations Security Council to ensure stronger border security among African countries, in order to implement counter-terrorism measures and to control the trafficking of small arms and light weapons.

With regard to the series of reports on various topics submitted by United Nations panels of experts to the Security Council and other bodies, while Liberia fully appreciates their importance, we would like to emphasize that they need to include the views and contributions of the relevant countries.

As far as the African Union and Security Council forces in Darfur are concerned, there are clearly major lessons which we must learn and on the basis of which we must make corrections.

In closing, I wish to reiterate Liberia's view, in the light of its very painful experiences over the past 15 years, that Africa's leadership must, through the African Union, do everything possible to avert the looming crises that pose threats to the continent and to world peace and security. I also wish to reiterate that there can be no sustainable security without development and no development without sustainable security.

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Mrs. Bernadette Simvura, representative of Burundi.

Mrs. Simvura (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I should like to convey to you, Madam President, the apologies of Her Excellency Ms. Antoinette Batumubwira, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Burundi. For reasons beyond her control, she was obliged to leave the Chamber in order to catch her flight this afternoon. She requested that I read out the following message to the Council.

> "Permit me at the outset to express the regrets of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Burundi, who is unable to attend this meeting. The President, Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza, requested that I wish you, Madam President, every success in this meeting and express Burundi's commitment to work within the United Nations and the African Union for regional and international peace and security.
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> "Burundi's presence at this meeting, and its commitment to strengthen the relationship between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, are based on three considerations.
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> "First, since 1 April 2008, Burundi has been a member of the African Union Peace and Security Council. Therefore, the Government of Burundi is preparing to contribute to that important task with every means at its disposal.
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> "Secondly, over the past 15 years, Burundi has benefited from the support and assistance of the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, and of the African Union, in particular its Peace and Security Council.
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> "In that regard, our experience as a country that has seen the deployment of Organization of African Union observer missions and the African Union Mission in Burundi, followed by the United Nations Operation in Burundi, equips us today to make a valuable contribution to the analyses and debates on issues relating to joint efforts between the United Nations and the African Union aimed at restoring and maintaining peace. Beginning with peacekeeping efforts by the United Nations and the African Union, Burundi has now moved on to the peacebuilding

phase. In that connection as well, Burundi's contribution will be enriched by our experience.

"Thirdly, and finally, our participation in this meeting is relevant because Burundi is taking part in peacekeeping operations in Africa. A Burundian national defence force battalion is now in Somalia as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia. A second battalion is preparing to deploy to Somalia. Although we have been saddened by the death of a soldier in that operation, the Government of Burundi continues to believe that it has a duty to contribute in this way to peace on our continent, all the more so because our country has enjoyed the support of many African countries and countries from other continents. In that regard, I wish in particular to refer to the large South African contingent that has already contributed a great deal in the context, initially, of African Union and, subsequently, of United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Burundi. Our military and police officers are also participating in observer missions in Darfur and Côte d'Ivoire. Burundi also plans to send troops to Chad.

"It is in the light of all these considerations that the Government of Burundi is here today. We hope that the draft resolution to be adopted at the end of this meeting of the Security Council on Cooperation with the African Union will enjoy the full political and financial support necessary for its implementation. At stake is the credibility of our two organizations — and, more so, that of our overriding commitment to maintain regional and international peace and security."

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Sanya Štiglic, Permanent Representative of Slovenia.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): I have the honour to address the Council on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, and the European Free Trade Association countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Given the time constraints, I will shorten my statement. The full version is now being distributed and constitutes our official statement.

The creation of the African Union (AU) and its organs has been one of the most promising developments in recent years. It is therefore highly appropriate to focus this discussion on Africa. The very presence of such distinguished guests adds particular weight to the significance of today's debate.

I would like especially to thank the Secretary-General for his remarks and his personal commitment to promoting dialogue between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

The European Union is firmly committed to, and actively supports, effective multilateralism. In that context, the importance of regional organizations and their potential in preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding has grown considerably over the past years. It is only to be expected that their contribution in the foreseeable future will continue to increase steadily.

The development of a stronger international society, well-functioning international institutions and a rules-based international order with the United Nations at its core is a central objective of the European Union, which recalls the primary responsibility of the Security Council to maintain international peace and security. Regional organizations can reinforce and complement United Nations efforts through an active role in maintaining international peace and security, in the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter, as was also stressed in resolution 1631 (2005).

The European Union seeks to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations on, inter alia, areas of crisis management and peacekeeping operations, counter-terrorism, human rights, sustainable development and climate change. In recent years, the European Union has made significant progress in the development of its own crisis management structures. This has allowed the EU to deploy numerous civilian and military operations, many of them in support of or at the request of the United Nations.

Under the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy, and in addition to individual EU member States' commitments, the European Union

continues to support peacekeeping efforts in Africa, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Chad and the Central African Republic, in line with substantial European Commission support. We remain committed to further developing our relationship with the United Nations, especially by working closely together in implementing the joint statement on United Nations-EU cooperation in crisis management signed in June 2007.

The second European Union-Africa Summit, held in Lisbon in 2007, laid down the foundations of a strategic partnership. We have reached a new milestone in our cooperation. In the field of peace and security, the first priority of the partnership aims at strengthening dialogue to reach common positions and implement common approaches on challenges to peace and security in Africa, in Europe and globally. The second priority is to work together towards the full and effective functioning of the African peace and security architecture, in particular through the African standby force, the Continental Early Warning System and regional mechanisms and organizations. The third priority is to provide predictable and sustainable financing for Africa-led peace support operations, to ensure that the AU and regional mechanisms will be able to plan and conduct peace support operations. Substantial support has been provided to capacity-building at the regional and subregional levels, as well as to specific African-led peace operations, including in Darfur, Somalia and the Central African Republic. These operations have been supported by the Peace Facility for Africa, through which €350 million has already been committed, and by bilateral contributions of EU member States. Furthermore, we are working with the Group of Eight (G-8) and other members of the international community to contribute to the funding of African-led peace support operations.

A culture of prevention is indeed gaining ground, as is the understanding of the need to strengthen and support the tools used when responding to situations that could potentially lead to violence. In parallel, more attention has been given to addressing the root causes of conflict. The sooner we act to prevent conflict, the greater the chances of success.

The EU recognizes the importance of different conflict prevention tools, as highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/18). The use of quiet diplomacy and preventive mediation, such as the Mediation Support Unit of the Department for Political Affairs, as well as the effective use of sanctions and the Secretary-General's good offices, are essential in de-escalating potential violent conflicts.

The European Union believes that it is essential to include civil society in conflict prevention, as it promotes encouraging links between civil society and Government, as well as local ownership. Moreover, women should play a positive role in conflict prevention, and they are still underrepresented in formal stages of conflict prevention. Similarly, the implementation of resolution 1612 (2005) on children affected by armed conflict continues to require further application.

The European Union considers the Peacebuilding Commission to be an important achievement of the United Nations reform process. We welcome the engagement the Commission has shown in Burundi and Sierra Leone in the first year of operation, and welcome the placing of Guinea-Bissau on its agenda. Through the European Development Fund and other European Commission instruments, the EU plays a major role in assisting those countries in meeting their peacebuilding challenges. The recent launch of the European Security and Defence Policy mission in support of security sector reform in Guinea-Bissau further reaffirms the EU's readiness to use its full policy mix of instruments in support of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The European Union remains committed to international justice, which is particularly relevant in conflict areas. We firmly believe that there can be no impunity, in particular for the most serious crimes, and that there can be no long-standing peace without justice.

While the primary responsibility for conflict prevention rests with Member States, the international community is crucial in providing much-needed support, especially through regional and subregional organizations. The recent support provided by the United Nations and the EU to such organizations in their efforts to improve relations between political parties in Kenya, as well as ongoing international and regional efforts in dealing with humanitarian and security situations such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan and Somalia, only reaffirm the need to further cooperation with regional organizations.

The European Union remains very concerned about the political situation in Zimbabwe and will continue to closely monitor the situation on the ground and support efforts towards ensuring democracy, stability, economic recovery and respect for human rights. The European Union supports the call launched at the special summit of the Southern Africa Development Community for the expeditious release of the presidential election results, in accordance with the due process of law. It reiterates its concern at the prolonged and unexplained delay in releasing the presidential results, which is undermining the credibility of the process.

In conclusion, I would like to thank South Africa for its leadership in convening this debate. Let me reaffirm that it is a priority for the European Union to continue providing its expertise and resources to peace and stability in Africa as a partner of both the United Nations and the African Union.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Vanu Gopala Menon, Permanent Representative of Singapore.

Mr. Menon (Singapore): I am making this statement on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Today, we live in a more complex and interconnected world, with many new actors on the international stage and more variables and alignments to consider. While the threat of global war has receded, there has been an increase in the number of smaller conflicts. Those are often asymmetric, low-intensity and diffused. It has become a messier world. The situation presents new challenges to global peace and security. Obviously, the United Nations has a crucial role to play, but in a globalized world regional cooperation can also play a key role. Even the United Nations Charter recognizes the role that regional arrangements can play in helping the United Nations to achieve its objectives.

ASEAN and the African Union (AU) are examples of regional organizations that have helped to build and protect regional peace and security. We note that many ASEAN members have long-standing historical ties with Africa. Since 1955, the Bandung Asian-African Conference has promoted the Bandung spirit of solidarity, friendship and cooperation between Asia and Africa. That spirit was reaffirmed by President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa on behalf of the African Union at the eighth ASEAN summit in Cambodia in November 2002. President Mbeki not only recalled the historical roots of cooperation between Asia and Africa, but he also commended ASEAN's programmes in South-South cooperation and its determined efforts to promote a region free of nuclear weapons and terrorism.

In response, ASEAN leaders found much common ground with African aspirations and acknowledged the need for greater interaction between ASEAN and the AU. They acknowledged the need for greater interaction between the two regional organizations, including a possible meeting between the two secretariats. They also agreed to take steps to promote stronger ties between Asia and Africa, including convening an ASEAN-New Partnership for Africa's Development conference.

That idea was soon followed by the Asian-African Subregional Organizations Conference (AASROC) process, which was initiated in Bandung, Indonesia, in 2003. A second AASROC was held in Durban, South Africa, in 2004. In 2005, an Asia-Africa Summit was held in Bandung, commemorating the golden jubilee of the Bandung spirit. At the Summit, the leaders of the Asian and African countries adopted a declaration on the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership to serve as a framework for building stronger links between Asia and Africa covering three broad areas of partnership — political solidarity, economic cooperation and sociocultural relations. The Strategic Partnership would address issues of common concern, such as armed conflicts, weapons of mass destruction, transnational organized crime and terrorism, which are fundamental to ensuring peace, stability and security. In that respect, ASEAN looks forward to the further strengthening of cooperation with the AU.

As a regional organization, the AU serves as a key forum for African States to interact and cooperate with each other to promote such common objectives as good governance, sustainable development, and peace and stability. For example, AU peacekeepers have been deployed to areas such as Burundi, Somalia, the Comoros and Darfur. We note that a mutually beneficial AU-United Nations partnership has grown over the years and continues to serve as a good example of how regional organizations can positively contribute to the maintenance of international peace

and security. ASEAN supports all efforts to strengthen the AU-United Nations partnership.

On our part, ASEAN has evolved into a multifaceted organization with cooperation in many fields. A shared sense of destiny and community motivated us to conclude the ASEAN Charter last year. The Charter reflects our common vision and commitment to the development of an ASEAN community as a region of lasting peace and stability, sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and social progress. It will remake ASEAN into a more effective and rules-based organization in today's rapidly changing global landscape.

ASEAN has always regarded economic cooperation as a key factor to achieving peace and prosperity in the region. In that regard, our leaders adopted an ASEAN economic community blueprint last year to integrate the 10 ASEAN economies into one single market and production base. We will also be developing similar blueprints for our other two pillars — political security and sociocultural cooperation. For example, within ASEAN, we have recently instituted the ASEAN defence ministers meeting to further enhance mutual trust and confidence among our defence establishments and to explore practical and concrete cooperation. That allows us to actively address non-traditional and transborder security concerns among our members and with external partners.

In conclusion, allow me to express ASEAN's appreciation to the AU and the United Nations for the growing collaboration over the years. As observed by President Mbeki in 2002, the potential for ASEAN and the AU to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation is significant. As for ASEAN-United Nations cooperation, that has existed since our establishment in 1967. We are pleased that ASEAN acquired formal observer status in the United Nations in 2006, and concluded a memorandum of understanding on ASEAN-United Nations cooperation the following year. Those moves reaffirm the mutual commitment between our regional grouping and the United Nations. ASEAN looks forward to enhanced cooperation with both the AU and the United Nations in working towards preserving international peace and security and promoting sustainable development.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Yahya Mahmassani, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Mahmassani (League of Arab States) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I should also like to commend your initiative to convene this debate to enhance the Security Council's role in strengthening the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security.

I take this opportunity to express our appreciation to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, for his successful presidency of the Council last month.

In view of the geographical and historical ties between the African Union (AU) and the League of Arab States, I want to stress the importance of horizontal cooperation among regional organizations. This is exemplified by the distinguished record of cooperation between the Arab League and the AU. Eighty per cent of Arab League citizens reside on the African continent, and 50 per cent of the League's member States are also members of the African Union. Moreover, 20 per cent of African Union member States are members of the League of Arab States. This unique situation must be taken into account in considering the advantages offered by horizontal cooperation between the two organizations.

In the light of their common responsibilities and the interrelated interests of their member States, regional organizations possess distinct advantages that enable them to address regional challenges and threats to international peace and security. These include their proximity to conflict areas and their knowledge and well-informed views on the specifics of the conflicts.

The great challenges of the first years of the twenty-first century have resulted in stronger cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the implementation of the relevant resolutions and statements of the Security Council and of the provisions of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1).

In the framework of the shared responsibility of the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security and of

the geographic and demographic interrelationship between the Arab League and the African Union, the two organizations have been taking positive steps in the settlement of conflict issues. Effective cooperation between our organizations has proven to be a viable approach to resolving a number of crises and other issues, along with strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and our two organizations with a view to safeguarding security and stability throughout the African continent. We have witnessed this in the Sudan peace negotiations and in the process of finding a way to resolve the Darfur crisis, as well as in the effort to attain security and stability in Somalia and, more recently, in the Union of the Comoros. This embodies the concept of tripartite cooperation among the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the African Union.

The Charter of the United Nations gives the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. But cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations has become inevitable; it is at the heart of the interests and the policies of regional organizations, owing to the positive and effective role those organizations play in addressing regional issues and in the peaceful settlement of disputes. Regional organizations make an effective contribution to strengthening United Nations capacities, especially in the spheres of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and exchanges of expertise.

The Security Council should undertake effective cooperation with regional organizations, including the African Union, in order to bolster its important role in the maintenance of international peace and security and in conflict prevention. It should define guiding principles for the expansion of dialogue and cooperation between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council in order to foster the political will needed to maintain peace and to implement the relevant resolutions.

In the context of strengthening the partnership between the African Union and the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council must be more responsive and must make a greater effort to achieve the partnership we are seeking and to overcome the challenges it is facing. This would be facilitated by early warning systems to address and manage crises before they escalate, as well as by a process by which to allocate responsibilities and by an expansion of the scope of AU-Security Council cooperation and consultation.

Enhancing the regional dimension of peacemaking and strengthening the leading role of the AU in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa are of great importance, and the Security Council must provide logistical and technical support to AU member States as they work to maintain the peace in post-conflict situations. It is also important to improve coordination among various African initiatives, to provide peacekeeping training and to establish regional centres in order to prevent crises from recurring and to enhance the financial and administrative capacity of the AU with respect to peacekeeping operations, the protection of civilians and the delivery of humanitarian aid to those affected by conflict.

Issues related to international peace and security are closely linked with those related to development and economic growth in Africa; thus, the United Nations must not view African issues in strictly security or political terms. These are economic and development issues as well, and they require greater political will to provide further support to the AU, enabling it to address and overcome the challenges facing it, to make progress in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and to free the continent from conflict.

In addition, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security must be enhanced in the framework of United Nations reform. That means reforming its institutions and improving its performance to equip it better to confront the challenges facing the international community.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Yukio Takasu, Permanent Representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): First of all, I would like to express my deep appreciation to you, Mr. President, and, through you, to all the other members of the Council for giving me the opportunity to address this high-level meeting in my capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Peacebuilding Commission is actively engaged in effectively supporting post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, in the belief that the measure of its success is real impact on the ground.

In accordance with its mandate, the Peacebuilding Commission is striving to marshal support and resources for peacebuilding and recovery in post-conflict countries and to improve coordination within and outside the United Nations system in an integrated manner. We have been trying our best to enhance cooperation with partners beyond the United Nations system, such as regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions, bilateral donors and civil society.

One of the key observations from our intensive work is that all peacebuilding efforts require addressing the regional as well as the local dimensions. As most conflicts have significant regional dimensions, it is indispensable to engage regional and subregional organizations in the process. Issues such as the illicit trade in arms and narcotics trafficking cannot be addressed without coordinated regional and international efforts, including effective border control among the countries in a given region. Youth unemployment and a lack of economic opportunities are widely recognized as a common challenge to post-conflict societies. This problem also requires a regional approach, as unemployed youth often move from one place to another in search of employment opportunities, including, sometimes, as soldiers. The Peacebuilding Commission has analysed those issues and has offered practical guidance in our country-specific activities and in the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

The Peacebuilding Commission truly values the ongoing efforts of regional and subregional organizations. These organizations play an important role in the areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. At the same time, their activities are more effective when they are fully integrated into, and well coordinated with, the overall work of the Commission. Successful peacebuilding requires the sustained engagement of multifaceted stakeholders with diverse expertise and specialties. I recognize the essential added value that the Peacebuilding Commission can provide with its convening role of mobilizing the dedicated efforts of all stakeholders.

The founding resolutions of the Peacebuilding Commission refer directly to Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter and thereby provide a strong rationale for close collaboration between the Commission and regional and subregional organizations. The Commission will explore practical and flexible ways to cooperate and make a concrete difference on the ground.

The first three countries to be considered by the Commission, namely, Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, are all in Africa. As a member of all three country-specific configurations of the Commission, the African Union has been an effective and active contributor to the Council's deliberations, both in New York and on the ground. We value and appreciate the Union's effective partnership. In that connection, I would like to suggest two ways of promoting more enhanced collaboration between the African Union and the Peacebuilding Commission.

First, the African Union may wish to have more active inputs in the process of drafting and implementing the integrated peacebuilding strategies of the Peacebuilding Commission and to align itself more closely with them. The strategies are articulated in such a way as to minimize the risk of relapse into conflict, and they thus also contribute to conflict prevention. The integrated strategies elaborated for Burundi and Sierra Leone serve as a good basis for cooperation activities by the African Union.

Secondly, we see great potential in harmonizing the policy framework on post-conflict reconstruction and development adopted by the African Union's Executive Council and the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, which take similar approaches to promoting post-conflict peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Support Office is engaged in active collaboration with the AU's subcluster on the policy framework, which is expected to produce tangible benefits for both the Peacebuilding Commission and the African Union Peace and Security Council. Those efforts will also facilitate the development of linkages between post-conflict reconstruction and development.

In conclusion, I can tell the Council that we are making great strides in fostering close collaboration between the Peacebuilding Commission and regional and subregional organizations, starting with the African Union, to promote peacebuilding and conflict prevention in Africa. I intend to consult further with members of the Commission on how it can best address that need. The Commission's planned meeting tomorrow afternoon with the Chairperson of the African Union Peace and Security Council will provide a useful opportunity to that end. I look forward to fruitful discussions on that occasion.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Leslie Kojo Christian, Permanent Representative of Ghana.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): I wish to congratulate South Africa on presiding over the Security Council for the month of April and on organizing this debate. I wish to convey to the Council fraternal greetings from His Excellency President J. A. Kufuor, who was prevented from coming to New York by pressing matters of State and the forthcoming twelfth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to be held in Accra.

Ghana appreciates the continued support of the United Nations and the international community aimed at the resolution of the conflicts in Africa, including the deployment of two thirds of all United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa, as well as the commendable contributions of relief agencies towards the alleviation of the plight of persons displaced by conflicts. While there has been significant progress in the resolution of some conflicts in Africa, the current situation in other parts of the continent demands our most urgent attention.

The role of the United Nations remains crucial in Africa's quest for a new era of peace and stability. Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, which explicitly prescribes a role for regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, dictates the need for a close and symbiotic relationship between the United Nations and the African Union, given the current situation on our continent.

In that connection, it is my delegation's view that, if we are to ensure more effective resolution of conflicts in Africa, there should be a calculated and conscious strategy aimed at promoting the interdependence of the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. That requires, among other things, full implementation of the 10-year capacity-building framework for cooperation concluded between the Secretary-General and the African Union Commission in November 2006.

The lack of resources, coupled with other factors, has undermined the deployment of African Union peacekeeping operations in Africa. Therefore, we urge the United Nations Security Council and the international community to step up their efforts to address the critical resource gaps.

As recent reports of the Secretary-General have shown, the cost of prevention is far less than the cost of resolving conflicts. Therefore, the need to pursue a strategy of prevention, which entails tackling the underlying causes of conflict and instability, should receive the priority attention of the international community. To that end, we call upon the international community, in particular the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, to actively support the African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework, adopted in 2006, which focuses on tackling the root causes of conflict and thereby preventing the occurrence or recurrence of crises.

In that regard, we acknowledge the important contribution of the Peacebuilding Commission, of which Ghana is a current Vice-Chair, to the ongoing efforts to rebuild Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, aimed at ensuring sustainable peace in those countries, which remain on the agendas of both the Security Council and the Commission.

Africa's development blueprint, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), reaffirms the commitment of African States to the tenets of good governance and democracy, underpinned by the promotion of economic and social justice and scrupulous respect for human rights and the rule of law, as prerequisites for durable peace and security.

Ghana is proud to be among the African countries that have so far subscribed to the African Peer Review Mechanism in the context of NEPAD — a process by which the quality of national governance in our country is subjected to external scrutiny. It is our firm conviction that it is only through such constructive processes that Africa will emerge stronger and more resilient. We are optimistic that the goals of the African renaissance, namely, peace, stability and prosperity, will be attained sooner rather than later throughout the entire continent of Africa.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Francis K. Butagira, Permanent Representative of Uganda.

Mr. Butagira (Uganda): Let me take this opportunity to thank the South African presidency of the Security Council for organizing this important debate. My delegation is also extremely pleased at the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General, who has devoted so much time to the cause of global peace and security.

In June last year in Addis Ababa, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council issued a joint communiqué by which they committed themselves to the development of a stronger and more structured relationship between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council on conflict prevention, management and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, including post-conflict reconstruction and development. They further agreed to strengthen the relationships between all the relevant structures of the United Nations Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council.

We encourage close consultations between the African Union and this important organ of the United Nations, whose primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security.

Africa is inspired by the spirit of collective security of the Charter of the United Nations. It was out of that fundamental conviction and commitment that the AU and the AU Peace and Security Council were born to oversee Africa's regional peace and security concerns. We firmly believe that collective security should be applied equitably, without discrimination.

To millions of Africans, tangible improvements relating to development, security and the enhancement of human security remain pivotal. That is why we are encouraged by the report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security (S/2008/186). The operations of regional organizations and their relations with the United Nations must be predicated on the principle of multilateralism. Hence, the efforts of the United Nations Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council are mutually reinforcing. However, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The effectiveness of the AU's Peace and Security Council is premised on three principles: first, the ability to enforce agreed norms among AU member States, secondly, the will to harmonize Africa's regional security arrangements and, thirdly, the commitment by African Governments to provide sustainable and predictable financing for AU peace initiatives.

Regrettably, for this new and struggling organization that is grappling with a multiplicity of problems, there are deficiencies in all three areas. That is why we have come here to make an earnest plea that peacekeeping operations undertaken by the AU be covered by the regular budget of the United Nations. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Rwanda has made reference to that particular aspect, as did President Kikwete of Tanzania this morning.

The international community must demonstrate similar concern and generosity to Africa as it did with regard to Bosnia, Kosovo, East Timor and Afghanistan. For instance, in 2000, while $2 billion was pledged for the reconstruction of the Balkans, barely $150 million was pledged for Sierra Leone. Thirty thousand NATO troops were deployed in Kosovo, as contrasted with 16,700 United Nations troops in the enormous country of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The AU Mission in Darfur was grossly underfunded, and it had a shortfall of $200 million in July 2005. The United Nations is dragging its feet in assuming its full responsibility to deploy in Somalia.

In order to allay fears that Africa is a breeding ground for terrorists, concerted efforts must be made to stem the tide of State failure. That means that the United Nations must invest not only in governance and capacity-building but also in enabling African States to address basic socio-economic problems such as the provision of education and health services. Poverty, alienation and dehumanizing conditions can lead to desperation and terrorism.

Another issue of special concern to my delegation is the need for the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission and the AU and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to establish a symbiotic relationship in the post-conflict and reconstruction areas. Such a relationship should be based on complementarity and the avoidance of duplication. They should enter into mutual relations to address the multiple challenges that war-affected societies face. They should establish a network of institutions and mechanisms to guide, plan, monitor and evaluate post-conflict reconstruction efforts in Africa, to make them coherent and practical on the ground. The Commission should avoid being politicized, lest it become irrelevant. There is a need for a programmatic and well-funded United Nations Peacebuilding Commission.

In conclusion, there is an overwhelming need for the Commission to deepen its relationship with the AU, NEPAD and other organs.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Araya Desta, Permanent Representative of Eritrea.

Mr. Desta (Eritrea): At the outset, I wish to thank your delegation, Madam President, for convening this important meeting. I also wish to express my delegation's profound appreciation for being invited to this debate on peace and security in Africa, which has been organized by South Africa in its capacity as President of the Security Council. My country holds this issue dear. President Isaias Afwerki has expressed his regret for not being able to attend this meeting due to other earlier commitments.

In the interest of time, I will briefly highlight the views of my Government on certain critical issues facing Africa. As many speakers who have spoken before me have highlighted the importance of improving the institutional cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, consistent with General Assembly resolution 61/296 of 17 September 2007, I shall limit my statement to a few elements.

The challenge is to build on existing cooperation in a manner that tackles crises and conflicts on the ground by means of real tangible commitments: first, by addressing African priorities; secondly, by having a common political and security assessment of a given conflict situation; thirdly, by being able to clearly define the role of each institution; fourthly, by initiating joint operations on clearly defined objectives; and, fifthly, by developing a comprehensive strategy to resolve conflicts and other pertinent issues. All of that requires strong political and financial commitments on the part of both institutions to resolve many of ongoing conflicts.

As the agenda of the Security Council demonstrates, Africa is the region that suffers most from intra-State and inter-State conflicts. Both the United Nations and the African Union are engaged in addressing many of those conflicts. Most of the conflicts continue to cause loss of life and immeasurable suffering to the people of our continent. The progress made in some conflict situations is laudable and promising. Yet, in others the response has been slow, necessitating that efforts be accelerated in order to end the suffering and frustration of the peoples affected.

Eritrea, which has risen from the ashes of war itself, is making an effort to contribute to peace and stability in the Sudan and Chad. It remains committed to regional peace and stability. In the same spirit and with the same objective as in southern and eastern parts of the Sudan, Eritrea has been working unreservedly in partnership with the United Nations, the African Union and neighbouring countries to bring all stakeholders to the negotiating table, with a view to reaching and concluding a peace agreement in Darfur.

It is important to assess every conflict situation objectively, on its own merits. Regional peace and security are maintained not by circumventing peace agreements when their implementation is being prevented, but by maintaining the integrity of those agreements and by accepting and respecting the authority of the bodies empowered by peace accords to carry out their mandates. When a peace treaty is breached and international law is violated, the Security Council, as the United Nations body empowered to maintain international peace and security, should exercise its moral and legal obligation to bring the parties into compliance, in the interests of peace and security. The African Union must also add its voice and moral authority to ensure that the rule of law is respected.

I would not want to conclude my statement without concurring with the views expressed by many that the support given to the African Union should be predictable and sustainable and that more time and resources should be devoted to preventing conflicts in our region.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Indonesia, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1809 (2008).

I wish to thank all the participants for joining together to make this meeting possible. My thanks go to all the heads of State and Government, ministers and other representatives, as well as to the Secretary-General.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.